

Cranberry-Apple Filled Walnut Torte

2 Large Granny Smith Apples, peeled, cored and finely chopped (Approximately 2 cups)

½ cup dried cranberries

¼ cup sugar

2 Tablespoons cornstarch

1 cup cranberry juice

1/2 cup cranberries

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon brandy extract

1 teaspoon lemon juice

2/3 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon salt

3 large eggs

¾ cup granulated sugar

1/3 cup water

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/3 cup ground walnuts

2 to 3 Tablespoons sifted powdered sugar

Frosting:

2 cups heavy whipping cream

½ teaspoon cinnamon

½ cup sifted powdered sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Chocolate Glaze:

½ cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

2 Tablespoons butter

1 Tablespoon light corn syrup

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Using cooking spray grease a 15- X 10- X 1-inch jelly roll pan. Line bottom of pan with wax paper; grease wax paper. Set aside.
3. Combine the first 8 ingredients in a medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, about 10 minutes or until cranberries plump and sauce is transparent and thickened. Stir in the lemon juice and brandy extract. Let cool completely.
4. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt in 1 quart mixing bowl and set aside.
5. Beat eggs in 2-quart mixing bowl with an electric mixer for 2 minutes. Gradually add ¾ cup sugar, beating 5 minutes or until thick and pale. Stir in 1/3 cup water and 1 teaspoon vanilla.
6. Gradually fold flour mixture and ground walnuts into the egg mixture with a wire whisk.
7. Spread batter evenly in prepared pan. Bake for 12 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched in the center.
8. Sift powdered sugar in a 15- X 10-inch rectangle on a cloth covered towel. When cake is done, immediately loosen from the sides of pan, and turn out onto towel. Peel off wax paper. Let cool. Using a pastry wheel cut the cake into 4 equal parts approximately 4- X 10-inches.
9. Place one layer at a time on a rectangular platter topping with 1/3 of the filling. Repeat.
10. Prepare frosting by whipping cream and then folding in remaining three ingredients, reserving 1/3 to put in a pastry bag to create a decorative border at top and bottom edge after frosting the entire torte. Chill.
11. Prepare glaze and drizzle creatively. Garnish with strawberry cuts and walnut halves as desired.